



MANAGING ATTORNEY (Parent or Child)

Legal Aid Services of Oklahoma (LASO) is searching for an experienced Managing Attorney (parent or child) (MA) to work in the **Family Representation Advocacy Program** in Tulsa, Oklahoma. The MA will work closely with the Executive Director and the Regional Director of Social Work and be primarily responsible for administrative oversight, support and implementation of the Family Representation Advocacy Program's high quality legal representation including interdisciplinary representation for (parents or children) throughout the State and will report to the Executive Director.

The MA will perform a variety of duties including recruitment, contracting and evaluation of contract attorneys; litigation support and case consultation, implementation of attorney practice standards, coordination and execution of attorney trainings and resources and a variety of support functions for the FRAP.

The Family Representation Advocacy Act enacted into law on June 2, 2023, established the Family Representation Advocacy Program (FRAP) within the Administrative Office of the Courts. The purpose of the FRAP is to ensure uniform and high quality legal trial and appellate representation for children and indigent parents, legal guardians and Indian custodians in deprived child actions brought by the state pursuant to the provisions of Section 1-1-101 et seq. of Title 10A of the Oklahoma Statutes.

The MA will play a leadership role in LASO's implementation of providing high quality legal representation to all parents, legal guardians, and Indian custodians who are entitled to trial and appellate court-appointed counsel and all children and will provide administrative oversight, as well as expanding and managing the contract attorneys. The MA will also provide support for contract attorneys.

The MA will need to work closely with the Executive team to create, evaluate, and refine processes, and tools to deliver high quality legal representation to the families the FRAP serves. The MA will provide training, oversight, and evaluation of the attorneys as well as relevant legal training for contracted social workers and parent mentors working directly with the contracted attorneys. The MA shall regularly review, understand, and thoughtfully implement new initiatives by gathering, analyzing and reporting data.

The MA will attend and actively participate in LASO administrative meetings and will work closely with external stakeholders in the child welfare system.

Job Description

The MA (parent or child) will serve the one of the five DHS regions in the State of Oklahoma and be responsible for the overall quality and consistency of the FRAP's legal representation

practice including interdisciplinary legal representation. The MA will be responsible to recruit, train, oversee, and support the attorney contractors. The MA will work closely with the Executive Director, Director of Social Work, and others on the Executive team to develop a strategic approach to the FRAP's legal practice and help shepherd the development and expansion of the FRAP's interdisciplinary legal representation to serve all eligible clients.

Responsibilities

-Working with the Executive Director, Regional Director of Social Work, and others on the Executive team as well as external stakeholders to execute the purpose of the FRAP as defined by Oklahoma Statute.

-Assist in drafting and preparing the annual budget narrative annual program performance report, and other agency related documents as necessary.

-Working to ensure high quality representation, consistent practice, and quality assurance to achieve best practices across the entire State of Oklahoma, planning or assisting in planning and developing policies and procedures, goals, and objectives to execute the purpose of the FRAP as defined by Oklahoma Statute.

-Having a routine, physical presence in the Court's in the assigned Region in which contracted attorneys appear.

-Meeting with Judges regarding uniform court administration of the Oklahoma Children's Code.

-Identifying systemic problems and developing and communicating strategies for addressing those problems.

-Recruiting and determining eligibility of private attorneys seeking an annual contract for (parent or child) legal representation.

-Overseeing quality of practice through annual review of the contract attorney's scope of work requirements contained within their contracts for competency and quality of legal services utilizing court observations and provide timely feedback to contract attorneys regarding observations, and use observations to inform consultation and training as well as addressing the validity of any concerns expressed by clients or the courts.

-Monitoring attorney caseloads, without substantive supervision of the same, to ensure that high quality services are being provided.

-Promote the use of interdisciplinary teams to achieve high quality parent and child representation.

-Assist in locating potential experts that will work at state rate, consulting with experts about their area of expertise, and promoting the use of appropriate experts in litigation strategies; Assist in evaluating the effectiveness of experts and improve engagement with experts and create a user-friendly expert database.

- Assisting contract attorneys through training and providing technical assistance by responding to litigation questions and requests for information.
- Identifying and creating professional development opportunities for contractors of the FRAP to include attorneys, social workers, and mentors, that includes evidence-based training, resources, and support.
- Monitor state and national legal developments in case law, regulations, and rules changes relevant to the FRAP's mission.
- Working closely with the Regional Director of Social Work to develop litigation and social work strategy and lead processes to assist the interdisciplinary teams.
- Manage resources effectively.
- Developing and managing the FRAP's information sharing resources such as listserv, brief bank, forms bank, case law, secondary resources and news; Assist in drafting and preparing legal memoranda and briefs as necessary.
- Representing the FRAP in various external meetings, trainings, and conferences.
- Assisting Regional Director of Social Work in ensuring the social work perspective is included in all training.
- Assisting the Executive team in analyzing and making decisions on potential ethical issues in the FRAP's; developing, disseminating, and ensuring compliance with the Oklahoma Rules of Professional Conduct's conflict rules.
- Generating management reports.
- Compiling data and statistics.
- Attending meetings with LASO administrative staff and staff in other LASO offices to discuss management issues and child welfare policy and practice issues.
- Developing and maintaining working relationships with judges, bar associations, Department of Human Services, along with other child welfare stakeholders.
- Working closely with the Executive team to meet the FRAP's contractual obligations and reporting requirements.
- Working closely with the Executive team to determine staffing for the FRAP's central office.

Requirements

- Licensed to practice law in the State of Oklahoma and in good standing with the Oklahoma Bar Association.
- J.D/LL.B. from an accredited law school and ten (10) years of experience as a licensed attorney.

- Familiar with the demands of representing children, parents, legal guardians, and Indian custodians in Oklahoma deprived child cases.
- At least three (3) years of supervisory experience and a minimum of five (5) years of litigation experience in child welfare and deprived court proceedings including substantial hearing and trial experience.
- Commitment to interdisciplinary representation of children and parents.
- Experience leading racially diverse teams and creating equitable and inclusive environments.
- Demonstrated commitment to an integrated strategy, including social work, litigation, policy and community engagement.
- Experience with public benefits, education, housing, or immigration.
- Experience with administration, training, organization, or program development.
- Ability to communicate effectively in multiple forms and oral advocacy contexts.
- Teamwork skills and aptitude for problem solving and management of independent contractors.

Desirable

- Experience working in a holistic practice.
- Experience mentoring other attorneys.
- Passion for deprived law and case strategy.

Physical Requirements

This work is sedentary and requires the following physical activities:

- Sitting for long periods of time; occasional bending, squatting, kneeling, stooping; good finger dexterity; frequent repetitive motions; and the ability to speak and hear; or the ability to perform essential job functions with reasonable accommodation.
- Frequent lifting (up to 25 pounds of paper supplies or minor office equipment).

Working Conditions

- Normal office environment.

Travel

Travel throughout the State of Oklahoma will be required on a frequent basis. Travel for conferences and training may also be required.

LASO is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action Employer